



COMMERCIAL FISHERIES REVIEW



A review of developments and news of the fishery industries
prepared in the BUREAU OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES.

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MACHINE HARVESTS IRISH MOSS

Seaweeds are difficult to harvest and Irish moss particularly so. The alga grows to about 3 to 5 inches in length and normally attaches itself to rocky, uneven sea bottoms. Up to now, these plants had to be harvested by hand. Earl C. Jertson of Fairhaven, Mass., has now invented a machine capable of detaching large quantities of Irish moss from the sea floor and bringing it to the surface. It was awarded U. S. Patent No. 2,941,344.

In essence, the device consists of an endless chain, similar to a rope ladder in shape. Rakes are attached to each of the "rungs" so they point along the chain. The ladder arrangement is fed out from one end of a boat and in at the other. The flexible rake-ladder follows the contours of the sea floor and catches the plants to be harvested.

The Irish moss is torn off the rocks and carried up to the boat where it is removed while the rakes are protected from all but the smallest rocks by the sides of the chain. Jertson assigned his patent to Marine Colloid, Inc., of Delaware. (Science News Letter, July 9, 1960.)



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